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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this handbook for Manitoba's parents is to encourage the sharing of ideas between school and home when children are in kindergarten through fourth grade. Topics addressed include: (1) ways in which children develop socially, emotionally, physically, intellectually, and creatively, and the importance of play in development; (2) aspects of the child's day at school, particularly language arts, mathematics, social studies, science, health, physical education, creative arts, computer education, integrated learning activities, learning centers, field trips, and immersion and heritage language programs; (3) things that children can do at home that will help them acquire language and mathematics skills, find self-expression in drama and music, watch television intelligently, and be safe; (4) answers for questions about child's education that parents frequently ask; and (5) general, print, audio, and environmental resources available to parents in Manitoba. (RH)

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a parent's companion

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the early years

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Manitoba Education

Introduction

The purpose of this handbook is to encourage the sharing of ideas between the home and school. As we work together as partners during the early school years (K-4), we can provide an excellent start to your child's school education.

You, as a parent, are your child's first teacher. When your child goes to school, another adult takes on some of the responsibility for your child's well-being. It is important that you and the school work together to ensure that your child continues to develop and learn both at home and school.

Research shows that when parents are involved in their child's education, the child performs better at school. When parents and teachers work together, they learn from each other. You can make your child's teacher aware of those things which can affect your child's learning, such as health problems or emotional upsets. Teachers can give you some more ideas to stimulate your child's thinking and attitude toward school and learning.

A simple activity like building a fort with blankets helps children develop the ability to think creatively, to solve problems, and to develop concepts of size and space.

While your child is at school, you should feel confident that he or she is receiving the best early years education possible. A good early years education program is devoted to developing children who can learn on their own, have a sense of worth, and become more responsible in their dealings with others.

A good early years program will have a positive influence on your child's life. Early years teachers recognize that:

- children are active,
- children are curious,
- children learn through playing,
- children learn by talking and acting,
- children are individuals, each is unique,
- children's surroundings have an important effect on their ability to learn,
- children are developing socially, emotionally, physically, intellectually and creatively at any given time and that all these areas are of equal importance and are linked together.

A good early years program will provide: a caring environment, opportunities for your child to work and play with other children, lessons which are geared to your child's needs, and a climate where parents and children from different cultural and family backgrounds are respected.

Acknowledgements

The Early Years: A Parent's Companion was written by Karen Botting. It was designed and illustrated by Donna Jones.

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Contents

This handbook will help you better understand how the home and school can work together as partners in your child's early education, from kindergarten to grade 4.

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How Children Develop

All children develop at their own rate:

- socially (getting along with others),
- emotionally (managing joy/frustration),
- physically (growing),
- intellectually (thinking/learning to do things),
- creatively (making things/developing ideas).

Each of the above areas is dependent on the other. For example, if children don't eat properly, they may not be able to concentrate or think about their school work. They may be cranky with others.

Development is a continuous process, each step building on the one before. For example, children babble before they talk and crawl before they walk. How they get along with others at home and school has an effect on this development. All of a child's early experiences have a great impact on his or her personality, physical growth, feelings of self-worth, ability to learn and ability to get along with others.

During the early years children learn to share time, materials and affection with others.

Social Development

To help your child to develop socially, both parents and teachers must set standards of acceptable behavior and then behave that way ourselves. A child is more likely to do as we do rather than as we say. For example, if we want a child to be friendly and considerate, then we must show him or her such behavior.

Experiences children have in the early years influence their development. During the early years children are capable of learning:

- how to play with others cooperatively (give and take).
- how to share time, materials and affection with others.
- how to adjust to disappointment without lashing out impulsively.
- how to respect people who are different from themselves.
- how to make the most of what they've got.

Emotional Development

For children to develop emotionally, they must feel accepted and secure. They must feel that the adults in their life will take care of them and love them no matter what. Of course, we're not always going to approve of how they behave. When a child does behave in a way that we find unacceptable, it helps to distinguish the child from the behavior. For example, "I love you very much, but I don't like what you did when you broke your friend's favorite doll."

Children have to realize that it's okay to be angry, but they can be taught to recognize when they are getting angry and when it is time to remove themselves or be removed from the situation until they've calmed down. Then they can come back and discuss what upset them in the first place.

Parents and teachers play a crucial role in helping children learn acceptable behavior.

Physical Development

To develop physically, children need a wide range of activities. They need opportunities to do large muscle activities like climbing, running, skipping, and swimming.

They need activities which help develop their "fine motor skills." These are activities which help develop muscles in the arms, hands, and fingers. Examples are: manipulating small materials such as crayons, shoelaces and scissors.

When children move in response to one of their senses (seeing, hearing, tasting, touching, smelling), this is called a "perceptual-motor skill." For example, when a ball is thrown to them, they will respond by attempting to catch it, using their sense of sight. Children develop perceptual-motor skills by being aware of their body parts and functions, by understanding directions (up-down, left-right), by being aware of their body and how it fits into space, and by being aware of their five senses.

When a ball is thrown to children, they respond by attempting to catch it using their sense of sight. The catching combined with the seeing is called a "perceptual-motor skill."

Intellectual Development

Until the age of eleven or beyond, children are what educators call "concrete thinkers." No, it has nothing to do with cement. It refers to their need to play with objects that can be handled and moved about. For example, when children are learning about fractions, it is not enough for them to use workbooks. They must experience the fractions by cutting an apple in half or by dividing bottle caps into three equal piles.

Parents at home and teachers at school help children develop intellectually by:

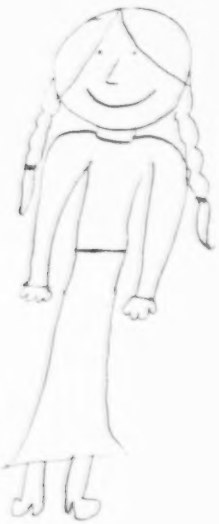
- providing concrete objects for them to play with: large clothespins, toys, blocks, pots, cans, to list a few.
- allowing them to sort objects according to color, texture and size; to arrange them in order of sequence; to measure using different units of measurement.
- letting them plan some of their own activities (building a fort in the backyard, building a snow sculpture).
- providing them with opportunities to: take messages, to explain, to argue, to listen, to question, to read and be read to.
- developing their awareness of the computer and television and how they can be used for learning.
- helping them feel good, even excited about learning.

Children develop intellectually by taking phone messages.

Creative Development

When children express their thoughts, feelings, beliefs and observations through the use of their imagination or through the use of materials in a new and unusual way, they are using their creative ability. One kindergarten student responded in an unusual way to a fairly standard question: "What do you want to be when you grow up?" Instead of drawing a police officer or a mail carrier, he painted a picture of a tiny knight perched on top of a fire-breathing dragon. He explained "When I grow up, I want to be a knight in shining armor."

Creative thinking is present in all children, including those with special needs. It can be encouraged in a child by providing a safe environment where children are allowed to try out their ideas or express their feelings through: language, music, shapes or color, movement and drama.



Most early years children are at the schematic stage of drawing (outlines only).

If we are to encourage creative thinking, then problems for children to solve should be open-ended; that is, they should have more than one possible solution. For example, several children may be given toilet rolls, egg cartons, ribbon, popsicle sticks and glue. They may all be creating spaceships. How each child goes about making his or her spaceship and what it finally looks like will be as varied as are the children.

As in other areas of learning, children cannot be rushed into the next stage of creative development. In art, the child's first experience with drawing will be a random scribble or a mark on the paper. Then the child will make controlled marks progressing to symbols of everyday things such as people, trees or houses. At this stage it is important that the child be encouraged to make symbols based on what he or she sees, not on what the teacher wants the child to do.

Most children in the early years are at the "schematic" stage of development; that is, they draw outlines only. In fact most adults are at this stage, drawing very much like the average eight-year-old. This is not because they lack talent. These adults did not learn how to look at art and see what is happening in the way of color, line, shape, and texture. These ideas are all part of the art curriculum.

Why Is Play So Important?

To understand why play is so important, it's necessary to answer the question, "what is play?" Most people would answer by saying that play is fun. But play is much more complex than that: it's a very valuable way to learn. Play, for the child, is like thought or work for the adult. Children are able to express their thoughts and needs through play. In their play they:

- explore
- experiment
- plan
- use language
- pretend
- practise
- imitate
- think
- solve problems

All these things that children do in play help their development. A simple activity like playing with the cans from the kitchen cupboard can teach them many things. For example, by handling the cans they learn that the cans only stack with the flat edges together. They also learn that the cans will stack higher if the larger cans are on the bottom and the smaller ones on the top. This is information that can be used when they build something else.

By playing with cans children learn that the cans only stack with the flat edges together.

As children get older they begin to play games with rules. For example, they make up a game of tag, deciding who will do the chasing and who will be chased. They may also begin to play board games or card games using their own rules. Through these games, they learn to make up rules, to cooperate and to solve problems when conflicts arise. Most children will come up with a way to solve a problem over a game because they usually want the game to continue.

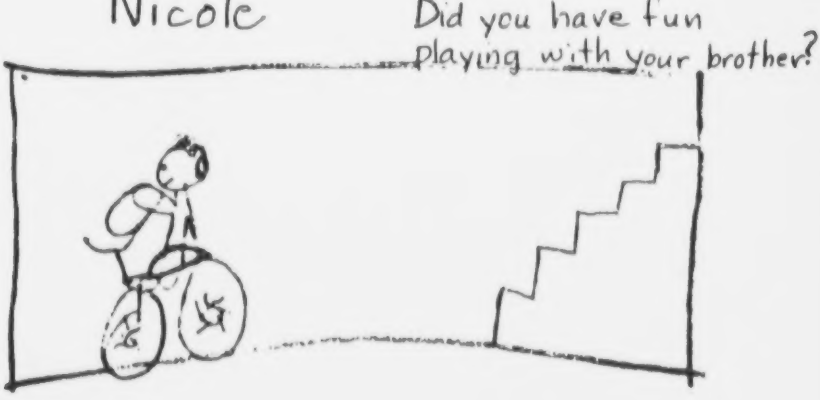
February 11` 1986

Tuesday Yestd day

I was pdayg wath my borther

My brother was playg Wath me

Nicole



Phonetic spelling is an early stage in children's writing.

Your Child's Day at School

Earlier in this parent's guide, it was stated that an early years education program considers the whole child: the child's social, emotional, physical, intellectual and creative development. Therefore, the curriculum is planned to promote the child's growth in all these areas.

Manitoba Education puts out curriculum guides in various subjects for teachers to use or adapt to their specific situations. These guides give the teachers the general concepts that they are to teach as well as suggested activities which will nurture growth. The teacher assesses the children's needs and development and uses the guides accordingly. Parents may wish to discuss the curriculum with regard to their child.

Language Arts

Traditionally, language arts has centred on reading. Now it is recognized that reading, writing, speaking and listening are equally important in a good language arts program.

- Children learn by doing.
- Children learn to talk by talking.
- Children learn to read by reading.
- Children learn to write by writing.

The teacher in an early years program will emphasize oral language development. This will be similar in a regular English program or a bilingual or immersion French program.

With a good oral language base, children will begin to read on their own WHEN THEY ARE READY! Reading begins naturally anywhere between the ages of four and eight.

All children read, but at different stages of development. Some will be reading signs and logos, while others will be reading print in books.

Young children believe they can write. Their first writing usually takes the form of drawing. These drawings are made for their own use. As they develop, children learn that writing can be a tool for communicating with others.

First, they will draw, then scribble write, then use both letters and numbers in their writing, then spell phonetically (t grl wks = the girl walks) and finally learn to use conventional forms of writing. This is all part of the developmental process.

Children will also develop their language by listening to stories, predicting what will happen and also by retelling stories.

Drama in the classroom allows children to develop creatively by planning, using their imaginations and pretending. Drama can take several forms in the early years classroom. At a drama learning centre, children can create different environments—such as a restaurant, grocery store, home or the setting of a favorite story—and act out various parts. They may practise creative movement by moving to music, poetry, stories or one word suggestions such as "wiggle," "tumble." And their teacher may guide them in imagination exercises where they imagine situations, characters, emotions in their minds.

Mathematics

Children in the early years of school are at an intellectual level where they need lots of "concrete" or real experiences in order to understand the world around them. Therefore, the early years mathematics curriculum guides stress a "hands-on" approach to teaching—an approach where the children handle a wide variety of objects.

Before children understand the printed symbols such as 1 + 4 = 5 or 150 x 2 = 300, they need lots of experiences matching, grouping, patterning and counting different objects. For example, after a child learns that 3 beans or buttons in one hand plus 2 beans or buttons in the other make 5 altogether, then he or she may be ready for making the symbols that match 3 + 2 = 5.

A large part of the mathematics program is also devoted to solving problems. Throughout the early school years much of the problem solving will be done orally with concrete materials. Then the children will do both oral and written problems.

Social Studies

Social studies in the early years helps children develop a positive self-concept by first understanding themselves and their place in a family structure. They then branch out to study their neighborhood, their community and, finally, the world.

For example, in kindergarten and grade one, children learn about themselves by drawing pictures of themselves, their homes and their families. They may collect pictures of family groups, either

their own or make-believe ones. By grade two they will study different family structures including families in the past and families in the future.

By grade three they will learn about their community, its climate, location in the province and some of its history. By grade four they will be looking at communities around the world which are very different from their own. They will compare the two: types of houses, transportation systems, employment, and government.

Social studies helps children to understand their social environment.

Science

Science helps children understand the natural environment. It helps them understand how people, animals, the land, water and air are dependent upon each other.

In kindergarten children will compare and discuss the differences and similarities of living things using pictures, going on a trip to the zoo, or examining plants and animals provided by the teacher in the learning setting.

In grade two they will make lists of objects in the classroom that are either living or non-living, study all the living objects and list their common properties such as their ability to grow and their need of water, food, air and light.

By grade four, they will be observing and recording information about organisms in an aquarium. They will look at the fish, snails, and plants and record what each eats in order to understand the food chain. They will decide the most effective way to communicate this information (graphs, illustrations, written descriptions, etc.) and may present it to the entire class.

Health

The health curriculum was developed to motivate children to increase their knowledge about health but also to encourage them to practise good health habits.

One area that is very important in the health curriculum is personal safety. In kindergarten children will learn their names, addresses and phone numbers and may even practise making an emergency phone call. At the grade two level they will study bicycle safety. By grade three they will make a household search for dangerous products and attach labels to three such products.

Physical Education

Physical activity is a major part of a young child's growth and development. Success in physical activity helps the child's self-image and self-confidence. It promotes health and fitness for the future.

The physical education program will help the children develop balance, a necessary part of all physical activities. It will also improve transport skills, such as running, rolling, jumping, and manipulative skills, such as catching, kicking and throwing.

The physical education program will also help children develop social skills. In the early years, children take part in simple, short activities in which all participate. They gradually develop the ability to play together in games requiring teamwork.

Creative Arts

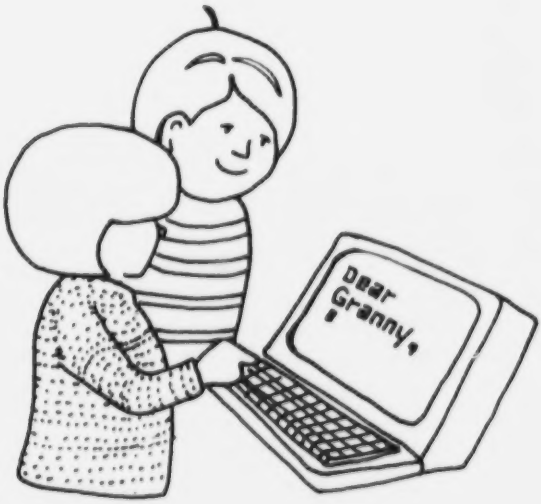
Children must be given opportunities to express themselves in a creative way. Music and art are essential to any early years program. It is important that children enjoy and take an active part in music experiences by making their own music, developing rhythm using percussion instruments, listening actively by dancing, clapping, tapping and singing to the music. Singing is perhaps the most important way of joining with other children in a happy, musical experience.

By grade four pupils will learn some music theory and be able to sing in harmony. A large part of the music program is music appreciation, listening to a variety of good music. This provides a beginning to a life-long enjoyment of music and an awareness of their culture and other cultures.

In an early years art program children will be given opportunities to use many different kinds of materials: paper, paint, crayons, clay, cloth, and junk. At first they are encouraged to use the materials spontaneously. They are concerned more with the doing than the finished work. By grade one and two they will focus on the image of their own bodies and the world around them (houses, trees, animals, other people). By grade three and four they will be more imaginative and creative in what they produce. They will be able to look at the world around them and see elements of design including line, color and texture. In art appreciation they will be able to look at two works of art and pick out the differences and similarities.

Computer Education

The computer is being used increasingly in many early years programs. There are many computer programs which allow children to explore designs and do problem solving. Very simple word-processing programs are used by young children to write stories. When children work in pairs at the computer they learn to cooperate and solve problems together.



Integration

Teachers often talk about "integration." Integration is not a new idea, but what does it mean?

Every day you integrate knowledge of various kinds. Cooking a favorite dish at home is an activity involving integration. You read the recipe (language arts). You measure the ingredients (mathematics), and you may change a liquid into a solid, such as cake batter into a cake (science).

In an early years program, it is more important to integrate knowledge than it is to teach separate subjects. For instance, the idea of change is a part of social studies, science and health. In social studies, children learn about changes in themselves and in their communities. In science, they learn about changes in matter, and in health, they learn about physical changes that result from growth.

Learning Centres

What Are They?

Learning centres are usually areas set up in the classroom where children have an opportunity to take charge of their own learning. These centres allow them to play or work at a variety of activities, to talk, to plan, to discuss with other children in a cooperative setting and to make decisions.

Why Are They So Important?

Earlier in this parent's guide it was established that children are active by nature, that language is important to learning and that play helps children learn. Learning centres are important because they provide opportunities for children to be **active learners.**

Here is an example of a class where children are studying about "fairy tales" at a number of different centres around the room. "Fairy tales" is a theme or unit of study which can be integrated into a variety of subject areas.

At the art centre: They are creating their own puppets with old socks, wool, toilet rolls and felt markers. They are planning, thinking, and creating based upon their knowledge of fairy tale characters.

At the sand table: They are re-enacting the "Three Billy Goats Gruff." They have cooperatively built a bridge of sand and have found something to be the troll. They are each playing a different role and interpreting the story in their own words.

At the writing centre: Some children are writing their own fairy tales.

At the listening and reading centre: They are using headsets to listen while they read fairy tales.

At the math centre: They have their measuring tapes and rulers and are ready to measure and design a puppet theatre with paper curtains that fit.

Another classroom of grade four students has as their theme "plants." Around the room children may be growing plants and charting that growth, conducting science experiments with plants, designing and constructing plant containers, researching and writing the history of certain plants or making a photo report of the plants in their classroom.

In both examples, the teacher is circulating around the centres questioning, observing and teaching.

Field Trips

Children out on a science field trip collect specimens from a stream with a net.

Not all learning takes place in the classroom. A walk in the neighbourhood or a trip to a special place can both be field trips. These field trips taken out into the community provide an excellent learning opportunity for young children. For instance, field trips:

- give children the chance to discover, share and talk together about their visit.
- provide excitement so that children will want to learn more about a new subject.

- satisfy the curiosity that children may have developed in one of the classroom learning centres.
- are a nice way to end an educational unit of study.
- provide an opportunity to practise good citizenship.
- can provide an enrichment experience, a trip that many children might not otherwise get.
- can help build understanding of people of different cultural backgrounds.

Immersion and Heritage Language Programs

Manitoba is a unique cultural mosaic. From this mosaic a variety of immersion and heritage language programs have emerged. These programs were developed to help children understand their own as well as the importance of another's culture. The same beliefs about child development, about language development, and about the importance of the environment and play hold true in all programs for children.

French Immersion Programs

The purpose of the French immersion program is to help children speak and understand both French and English. This is a long-term goal. In the early years the children are introduced to the second language through games, songs and daily conversation with the teacher. By grade four all of their instruction is in French except for English language arts. They learn to read and write French and present all school work (drama, projects, etc.) in French.

Heritage Language Programs

Heritage language programs have a two-fold purpose. One is to help the many ethnic groups in Manitoba to keep and develop their language and cultural heritage. The other is to give the opportunity to all Manitoba students to study other languages, in addition to English and French, regardless of their ethnic or cultural background.

The programs may be offered in two forms. The basic program is one in which the language is taught as a subject for a period each day. The bilingual program is one in which students are taught in the second language of their choice for a greater part of the day (for example, more than 50%).

The success of children in the second language is greatly determined by their desire to learn the language and the encouragement of their parents.

Things to Do at Home to Help Your Child Learn

"When am I going to find time to help my child learn?"
"I can't afford all those expensive, fancy toys!"

These are concerns of many parents today, but you don't need toys or a lot of time. Your child can learn in most everyday situations, with the materials, space and people around him or her. The important thing is to try to find ways in which you and your child can help each other. By helping at home, your child will develop a sense of self-worth, will gain independence and will learn many things which will help her or him at school.

Simple praise helps children feel good about themselves.

Language Development at Home

Talking with your child is very important in the development of language and thought. Here are some hints to encourage your child to talk:

- Have fun, make chatting, joking, talking a major part of your time together.
- Name things as you travel, cook, dress and prepare meals.
- Describe things using adjectives and adverbs such as the color-

ful dress, your red shirt, the biggest ball, walk slowly, come quickly.

- Ask questions: "How many carrots do you want?" "Do you want this long, thin one or that short, fat one?"
- Listen carefully; treat what he or she says as important.
- With older children, during mealtime ask, "What would you do?" questions to help them solve problems. "What would you do if you broke your mother's favorite coffee mug?" or "What would you do if Dad asked you to clean up your room and a friend came by and wanted you to play?"
- Challenge your child to express a point of view. Have him or her give as many reasons as possible for: staying up late, watching a favorite TV program, not cleaning up the room. Then, have him or her take the opposite point of view.

Ways to Help Your Child Learn to Read

Read to your child daily.

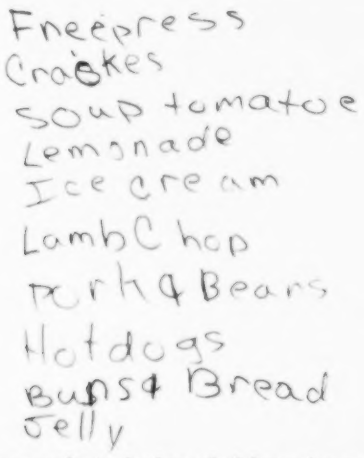
Read books you're enthusiastic about.
Use lots of expression when you read.
Let your child see the pages.
Let your child ask questions during the story.
Answer your child's questions patiently (promotes curiosity).
Make time for a discussion following the story.
Occasionally read a book slightly above your child's intellectual level.

Read about the author so you can let your child know books are written by people.
Set a good example by showing your child that you enjoy reading books, magazines, newspapers.
Let your child read to you or other family members.
Remember, your child may need to be active while listening.

Good reference books for parents: **Read-Aloud Handbook** by Jim Trelease (published by Penguin Books, 1982) and **Michele Landsberg's Guide to Children's Books** by Michele Landsberg (published by Penguin Books, 1986).

Tips to Encourage Your Child to Write

- Show your child the ideas or lists you make before writing a note or letter. (This will help your child understand that there are many steps to writing before there is a final product.)
- Show your child corrections you make when writing a letter or note; for example, crossing out or adding words, rearranging sentences. (This will make your child feel more comfortable about making mistakes.)
- After writing your note or letter, read it aloud and ask your child for help or suggestions. (This helps your child understand that questioning is important in order to change what is unclear.)
- When making grocery lists, have your child write down the groceries you need. Have your child spell the items aloud or copy from containers. (This will help your child's vocabulary and spelling.)



Making grocery lists helps children learn new words and practise spelling.

Mathematics at Home

Measuring

Before measuring or weighing, first have your child estimate what the result will be. It will give you an idea of whether your child understands measurement.

- Keep a height and weight chart showing your child's growth over a period of time.
- Have your child measure many household items, using rulers, scales and measuring cups.
- Give your child containers of different sizes and shapes (litres, 250 ml, etc.) for the bathtub or sink.
- Have your child help you prepare meals by measuring the ingredients, cutting recipes in half, figuring out portions for more people, and cutting the fruits and vegetables.
- Have older children try cooking something for themselves. Suggest something simple at first so that their first experience is a successful one. Suggested cookbooks for children: **Cook and Learn: A Child's Cookbook** by Beverly Weitch and Thelma Harms (published by Addison-Wesley, 1981) and **Cup Cooking** by Barbara Johnson and Betty Seimons (published by Early Educators Press, 1978).

Cooking with Dad can be a special event for a child.

Games

- Card games provide children with opportunities to use many mathematical processes: dealing an equal number of cards to each player is a division practice; matching games such as "memory" help your child see similarities in objects.
- Board games help your child's math when he or she adds the numbers on the dice, counts the moves or plans strategies.
- Using sports as a theme, develop games for both your young child and older child. Young children can group teams according to sport, uniform color, or type of equipment. With the sports section of the newspaper, an older child might develop a game of **sports math.** From the daily NHL hockey statistics he or she might answer the following questions:

1. Which team scored the most goals?
2. Which team scored the least goals?
3. Which team has given up the most goals?
4. Where do the Winnipeg Jets rank in terms of goals scored?
5. Will today's game of St. Louis at Hartford affect the standing?
6. Why not? or Why?

HOCKEY

NHL Feb. 23, 1986

CAMPBELL CONFERENCE

Smythe Division	G	W	L	T	F	A	P
Edmonton	61	41	14	6	323	248	88
Calgary	59	28	24	7	259	230	63
Los Angeles	60	20	34	6	217	291	46
Vancouver	58	17	32	9	209	243	43
Winnipeg	**61**	**18**	**37**	**6**	**218**	**286**	**42**
Norris Division							
Chicago	61	30	23	8	270	260	68
St. Louis	59	27	24	8	226	222	62
Minnesota	60	25	26	9	246	237	59
Toronto	59	17	36	6	231	294	40
Detroit	60	12	43	5	197	314	29

WALES CONFERENCE

Adams Division							
Montreal	61	33	22	6	272	205	72
Quebec	61	33	24	4	250	217	70
Boston	60	28	25	7	236	224	63
Buffalo	60	28	26	6	228	215	62
Hartford	60	28	30	2	242	234	58
Patrick Division							
Philadelphia	61	41	16	4	261	183	86
Washington	58	35	18	5	228	204	75
NY Islanders	60	29	21	10	244	216	68
Pittsburgh	60	28	25	7	241	212	63
NY Rangers	58	28	26	4	205	197	60
New Jersey	59	18	38	3	217	279	39

Today's games
St. Louis at Hartford
Quebec at Winnipeg (A)
Toronto at Minnesota
Calgary at Chicago
Washington at Buffalo
Boston at Vancouver
Tomorrow's games
Minnesota at NY Rangers
Los Angeles at Pittsburgh
Montreal at Edmonton

Key *G (goals), W (wins), L (losses), T (ties), F (goals for them), A (goals against them), P (points)*

Money

- Each time you give your child lunch money or an allowance, give him or her different coins which equal the same amount. For example, one time give 5 nickels or a quarter, or 25 pennies or 2 dimes and a nickel.
- Allow your child to make his or her own purchases at the store and then estimate and count the change.

Calculator

- Your child can learn to count by 2s, 3s, 5s and 10s using the calculator.
- Have your child check your grocery bill using the calculator.

Household Chores

- Allow your child to sort the laundry into size, type, or color in order to learn classification.
- Have him or her set the table to understand patterning, symmetry and matching.
- Let your child put the dishes away to practise sorting according to size, shape and function.

A Good Reference Book for Parents

Teaching Mathematics to Young Children: A Basic Guide by R. Jensen and D. Specter (published by Prentice Hall, 1984).

Creative Arts at Home

- Provide your child with lots of junk and watch for new creations. Examples of creative junk are listed below:
  - old toilet rolls
  - styrofoam meat trays
  - milk cartons
  - old socks
  - buttons
  - old paper bags
  - old newspapers
  - old ribbons
  - string
  - fabric
  - old clothes
  - scissors
  - crayons
  - glue
  - screens
  - hammers
  - nails
  - wood scraps
  - tires
  - old wheels
  - boxes

  (These can be turned into puppets, sculptures, miniature furniture, costumes, diaries, masks, pictures, whatever.)

Your child may enjoy making materials for creative arts.

Play-Dough

750 ml flour
250 ml salt
375 ml colored water
15 ml salad oil
Mix all ingredients in order given. Store in a plastic bag.

Finger Paint

250 ml corn starch
1-1/4 litres water
250 ml soap flakes
food coloring
Mix corn starch with 250 ml water. Boil 1 litre water. Add poster paint. Add soap flakes. Beat. Let cool before using.

A good reference book for parents: **Creativity, Art and the Young Child** by W. Lambert Brittain (published by Macmillan, 1979).

Making play dough figures helps children develop creatively.

Drama

To encourage your child to express him- or herself through drama:

- provide old clothes, sheets, curtains, shoes, hats, purses for dress up.
- provide old cardboard boxes to build a fort or a puppet theatre.
- allow him or her to make forts, boats, castles out of tables, blankets and pillows.
- allow your child to use kitchen chairs to form a train or bus.

A good reference book for parents: **Dorothy Heathcote: Drama as a Learning Medium** by Betty Jane Wagner (published by National Education Association, 1976).

Music

Listen to a variety of music with your child. Borrow records from the library. Use your radio. Sing with your child.

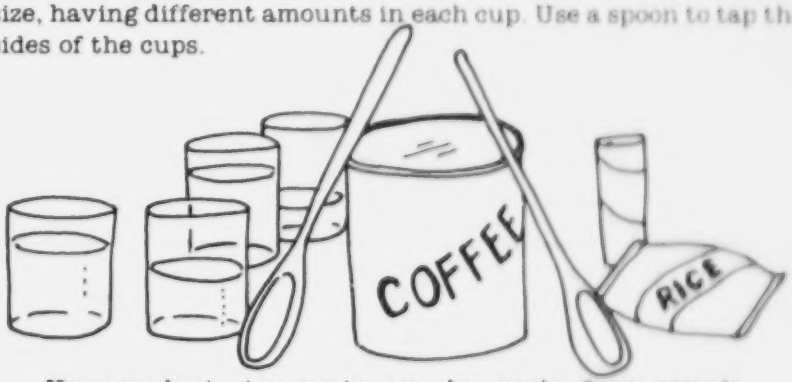
Besides listening to music and moving to music your child might like to make an instrument.

Homemade shaker: Put rice, beans and salt into three different toilet rolls. Seal the ends and use as shakers with three different sounds.

Homemade drum: Make a drum out of an old coffee tin; use spoons as drumsticks.

Homemade stringed instrument: Use a board, some nails and elastic bands to make a stringed instrument.

Homemade xylophone: Put water in five different cups of equal size, having different amounts in each cup. Use a spoon to tap the sides of the cups.



Homemade instruments can be made from simple materials.

A good reference book for parents: **Sally Go Round the Sun: Three Hundred Song Rhymes and Games of Canadian Children** by Edith Fowke (published by McClelland and Stewart, 1969).

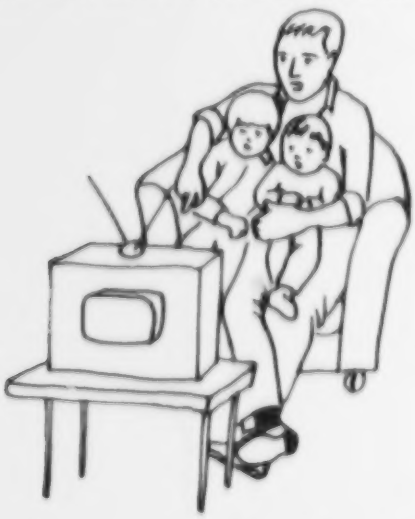
Television

You can use the television to help your child learn at home. Children need to learn how to control TV and not be controlled by it. Be aware of the following:

- Children learn better by participating in activities than by sitting in front of a television.
- Children can be highly influenced by television; it can affect how they dress, talk, act and even eat.
- Television can stifle thinking; commercials offer instant solutions to problems; i.e., "If you have a headache, take a pill."
- Television can be anti-social if talking is frowned upon during a show.

What Can Parents Do?

1. Guide television watching. Set an example of good television watching habits.
2. Watch television with your child and discuss issues raised on the program together.
3. Allow your child to participate with you in choosing which programs you'll both watch.
4. Provide other activities for your child to do.



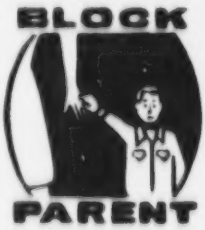
Your Child's Safety

Every parent hopes that their child will never have to face an upsetting event or emergency. Most children won't. However, there are some things that you can do to protect your child just in case.

A Checklist for Safeguarding Your Child

Knows name _____
Knows address _____
Knows home phone number _____
Knows parents' work phone numbers _____
Knows the name of a family friend or neighbor to whom he or she can go in case of an emergency _____
Knows how to exit from the house in case of fire _____
Knows how to identify possibly dangerous materials in the house such as boiling water, BBQ coals, matches, stairs, etc. _____
Knows how, when and where to cross the street _____

Talk to your child about community helpers such as block parents, safety patrols, police, and firefighters. Talk to him or her about safe behavior and discuss possible dangers.



A good reference book for parents: **A Parent's Guide to Street-proofing Children** by Richard C. Gossage and Melvin J. Gunton (published by McClelland and Stewart, 1981).

Parent and School Together

It's important that we meet and talk because your child is special to both of us. We can do more for your child if we work together.

Often parents are hesitant to talk to us because they're not quite sure what questions to ask. Here are some questions that parents frequently ask.

Q. What are my rights in regard to my child's education?

A. You have the right to be involved in your child's education. You have the right to talk with the teacher about your child's progress. Information about parents' rights can be found in the pamphlet, **Parents' Guide to the Public School's Act,** available from the Communications Branch of Manitoba Education.

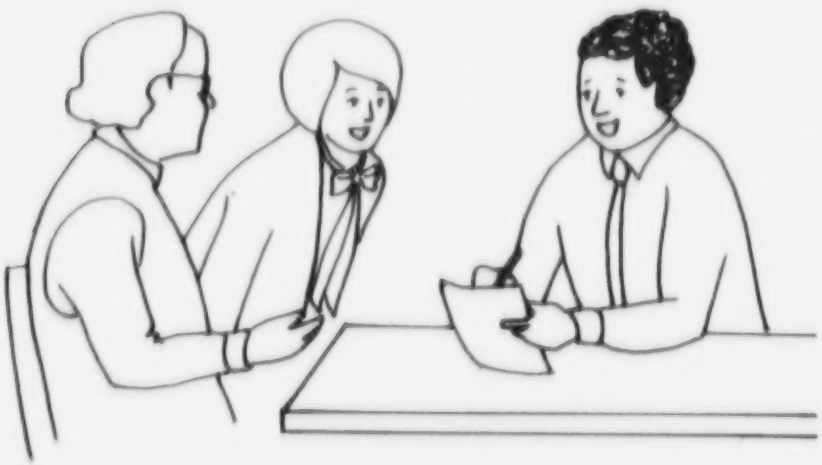
Q. What is the best way to find out how my child is doing?

A. Ask your child or ask your child's teacher. Most schools welcome questions at any time. Schools have parent-teacher interviews two or three times a year. (Usually, they are held shortly after your child receives a report card.)

Q. What should I ask in a parent-teacher interview?

A. **Ask** about your child's emotional development. Your question might be: "My child cries a lot at home when he doesn't get his own way, how does he react at school?"

Ask about your child's social development. A good question might be: "Does my child play well with the other children?"



Ask about your child's creative development. A revealing question might be: "What does my child learn by spending time at the cut-and-paste learning centre?"

Ask about your child's intellectual development. A good question might be: "She reads well at home, but what can I do to help her understand what she's read?"

Ask about your child's physical development. A good question might be: "My child appears clumsy at times. What kind of physical activities would remedy this?"

Ask how you might help your child at home.

Tell the teacher about any difficulties your child might be having at home. Health problems, family separation or death in the family can have an effect on your child's ability to learn.

Tell the teacher about things your child does particularly well: helps at home, plays on a hockey team, takes dancing lessons, minds brothers and sisters.

Q. What if I want more information about my child and it's not parent-teacher interview time?

A. Don't hesitate to call the school or drop into the school and ask the teacher for an explanation.

Q. What if I'm unhappy with the teacher's explanation?

A. You may want to talk to someone else about the problem. The following people in the school system are there to help you: the principal, the superintendent, your school trustee, the Minister of Education. (The secretary at your child's school should be able to tell you who these people are and how to contact them.)

Q. Sometimes when I go to the school I see people other than the teacher working with my child. Who are these people?

A. In most schools there are a variety of support people who may be working to help your child adjust to school either socially, emotionally or academically. These people include: resource teachers, special needs aids, social workers, psychologists, reading specialists, speech specialists, teachers' aids. You have the right to ask them what they are doing with your child. In some cases, your permission is required for others to work with your child.

Q. What if my child has special needs?

A. Manitoba Education believes that children with special needs should be integrated into the regular school program whenever possible. Children with special needs have the same basic developmental needs as other children. These needs are social,

emotional, physical, academic and creative.

It's up to you to let your neighborhood school know about your child's special needs. It's our responsibility to: accommodate those needs, provide extra supports if necessary and develop a team approach to plan for your child's education. That team should include school personnel, specialists and you.

Q. How do I enrol my child in a French immersion program?

A. Many school divisions offer French immersion. You should contact your school division office to find out which school in your area is designated for the program. Early entry is usually at the kindergarten or grade one level. You may want to:

- visit the school
- talk with the teacher and principal
- attend orientation meetings
- read further on the subject

Q. How do I enrol my child in a heritage language program?

A. To find out which school in your area has been designated for the program call your school division office or one of the multicultural resources listed at the back of this book.

Q. Do I have to speak the second language in order for my child to succeed in the program?

A. It's not necessary to speak the second language in order to enrol your child in French immersion or a heritage language program. The school will be solely responsible for teaching the second language. You can still help your child by doing activities such as those suggested in the previous chapter. Children usually transfer knowledge and ideas from one language to the other.

Q. How can I become involved in my child's school?

A. There are many ways:

- join your school's parent-teacher group.
- become a volunteer at the school: in the classroom, in the library, fund raising, supervising field trips, supervising the lunch room.
- become a "resource person," talking to students and teaching them a skill you have such as carpentry, print-making, bird watching.
- enrol for "Parenting Courses" offered by some schools.
- make a brief presentation to your school board about an issue you feel strongly about.
- attend school board meetings.
- make sure you know what your school board candidates stand

for in education, and at municipal election time, vote accordingly.

No matter what your question, let's get together and talk. By working together we can give your child what she or he needs to be a joyful and successful learner.

Resources

General

An Early Years Activity Calendar, with colorful illustrations and activities for every day of the month, available in English, French, German and Ukrainian from your local school for 50¢-60¢.
Parents' Guide to the Public Schools Act, available in English, French, Portuguese, Vietnamese and Philipino from Manitoba Education, Communications Branch, 945-6185.

Books

Baratta-Lorton, M. **Workjobs for Parents: Activity-Centred Learning in the Home.** Don Mills, ON: Addison-Wesley, 1975.

Hildebrand, Verna. **Parenting and Teaching Young Children.** Toronto: McGraw-Hill, 1981.

Jensen, R., and Spector, D. **Teaching Mathematics to Young Children: A Basic Guide.** Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1984.

Kohl, Herbert. **Growing With Your Children.** Toronto: Little, Brown and Co. (Canada), 1978.

Lamme, L.L. **Growing Up Reading/Growing Up Writing.** Washington, D.C.: Acropolis Books, 1984.

Landsberg, Michele. **Michele Landsberg's Guide to Children's Books.** Toronto: Penguin Books, 1986.

McGillivray, W. Russ, ed. **More French, S'il vous plaît!** Ottawa: Canadian Parents for French, 1985.

Marzollo, Jean, and Lloyd, Janice. **Learning Through Play.** New York: Harper and Row, 1972.

Steinman, Bobby. **Home Happenings: A Resource Guide for Parents of Young Children.** Willowdale, ON: Home Happenings, 1979.

Trelease, Jim. **Read-Aloud Handbook.** Markham, ON: Penguin Books, 1982.

Wolfgang, Charles H., Mackender, Bea, and Wolfgang, Mary E. **Growing and Learning Through Play.** New York: McGraw-Hill, 1981.

Records

There are many good children's records available. Check bookstores, record stores and libraries. Some artists to look for are Fred Penner; Raffi; and Sharon, Lois and Bram.

Places

Winnipeg

Block Parents, 905-504 Main Street, Winnipeg	943-8879
Canadian Parents for French (Manitoba), 605 Wayaota Street, Winnipeg	222-6537
Child and Family Services—Winnipeg	
Central, 294 William Avenue	945-5110
West, 2367 Ness Avenue	945-5120
Northwest, 1386 Main Street	945-5130
Northeast, 1100 Concordia Avenue	945-5140
East, 123 B Marion Street	233-8931
South, 897 Corydon Avenue	945-5160
Southeast, 511 Ellice Avenue	477-6050
Jewish, 10th Floor-228 Notre Dame Avenue	943-6425
Child Guidance Clinic, 700 Elgin Avenue	786-7841
Department of Culture, Heritage and Recreation, Multicultural Programs, 8th Floor, 177 Lombard Avenue	945-4509
Family Support Services Child Development Clinic, 825 Sherbrook Street	786-4761
Learning Assistance Centre, 305-777 Portage Avenue	786-8431
Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata, 531 Notre Dame Avenue	774-6531
Manitoba Association for Childbirth and Family Education, 890 Carter Avenue	475-1865
Manitoba Association for Children and Adults with Learning Disabilities, 201-720 Broadway	774-1821
Manitoba Association for the Promotion of Ancestral Languages, 1044-167 Lombard Avenue	943-2222
Manitoba Education	
Bureau de l'Education française, 509-1181 Portage Avenue	945-6916
Child Care and Development Branch, 206-1181 Portage Avenue	945-7912
Curriculum Development and Implementation Branch, 404-1181 Portage Avenue	945-6037
Native Education Branch, 408-1181 Portage Avenue	945-7886
Manitoba Foster Parents' Association, 2nd Floor, 114 Garry Street	945-8301

Manitoba Intercultural Council (MIC),	
500-283 Bannatyne Avenue	945-4576
Manitoba Metis Federation, 702-504 Main Street	942-8304
Multiculture Educational Resource Centre	945-5632
(MERC), Main Floor, 1181 Portage Avenue	1-800-282-8069
North End Women's Centre, 453 Selkirk Avenue	589-7347
Parent-Child Centres:	
425 Elgin Avenue	947-6825
233 McKenzie Street	589-4359
599 Ellice Avenue	772-4579
Parent and Childbirth Education (PACE),	
4th Floor, 831 Portage Avenue	945-8452
River Heights Family Life Education Centre,	
621 Oxford Street	452-1742
Secretary of State, Multiculturalism Section,	
201-303 Main Street	949-3601
Women's Resource Centre, YWCA,	
477 Webb Place	943-0381

Manitoba

CAS of Western Manitoba, 340-9th Street,	
Brandon	728-7000
CAS of Central Manitoba, 25-3rd Street,	
Portage la Prairie	857-8751
Indian Child Caring Agencies	
Anishinaabe Child and Family Services,	
Box 218, Ashern	768-3062
Awasis Agency, Island Lake Sub-Office,	
Garden Hill Band Office	456-2306
Awasis Agency of Northern Manitoba,	
3 Station Road, North Centre Mall, Thompson	778-4401
Awasis Agency, The Pas Sub-Office,	
Box 3910, Otineka Mall	632-7456
Dakota Ojibway, Child and Family Services,	
702 Douglas Street, Brandon	725-3560
West Region Child and Family Services,	
21-4th Avenue, N.W., Dauphin	638-8225
Flin Flon Metis Friendship Centre	687-3900
Ma-Mow-We-Tak Friendship Centre, Thompson	778-7337
Manitoba Community Services Regional Offices	
Winnipeg, 189 Evanson Street	945-6257
Westman, 340-9th Street, Brandon	728-7000

Parklands, 15-1st Avenue S.W., Dauphin	638-7024
201-4th Avenue S., Swan River	734-3436
Eastman, 20-1st Street S., Beausejour	268-1411
Interlake, 202-445 Main Street, Selkirk	482-4511
Norman, 50 Church Street, Flin Flon	687-3457
3rd Street and Ross, The Pas	623-6411
Thompson, 871 Thompson Drive S., Thompson	778-7371
Central, 25 Tupper Street N., Portage la Prairie	857-9711
Manitoba Education Child Care and Development Regional Offices	
Winnipeg, 206-1181 Portage Avenue	945-7912
North, Box 9-59 Elizabeth Drive, Thompson	778-4411 ext. 202
South Central, 56 Royal Road North, Portage la Prairie	239-1616
Parklands, 27 Second Avenue S.W., Dauphin	638-9111 ext. 422
Interlake/S.E., Box 1319, 77 First Avenue, Gimli	642-5242
South East, 3497 Pembina Highway, Winnipeg	261-3305
Parents Support Group, Thompson	677-3881
The Pas Friendship Centre	623-6459
The Pas Branch No. 1 of the Physically Handicapped	623-2243

** In most communities the following community services should be able to direct you to the appropriate help:

- crisis centres
- family doctors
- women's centres
- Home and School Associations
- home economists with Manitoba Agriculture
- hospitals
- school division offices
- municipal parks and recreation offices
- libraries
- public health units
- schools

The following pages are for you to list your own local resources.